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This is only one of many considerations which lead us to the conclusion that it is of essential importance to the Nation that the study of the German language should be not only maintained, but extended. Unfortunately, the problem may not prove to be so simple as it seems. Is it certain that after the war public opinion will at once be ready to give an improved position to German in schools? Yet wisdom and prudence demand that its position should be improved, for during the early part of this century the study of German was not going forward, but backward.

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### Reading.

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It is a generally recognized fact among modern language teachers that the discussion of methods of teaching reading touches the heart of our whole problem. Whatever we may wish to do in the way of laying a foundation for a later speaking knowledge, whatever general grammar instinct we may wish to develop, whatever habits we may wish to teach: it is with the development of at least a moderate ability to read the language that the vast majority of teachers have chiefly to do. For this reason no scattering of effort that will detract from success in teaching reading ability must be permitted. Real reading means, of course, the comprehending of the sense of a text without the mediation of translation, dictionary work, analysis or parsing. This is our aim. In whatever work we do, let us keep this ideal clearly before us. To arrive at this goal, however, in the brief time usually at our disposal, makes imperative the skilful use of all the above-mentioned tools. The first work with reading texts is usually in the nature of practice in the use of these tools, and this is justifiable. But the sin of most of our teaching has been that, in a two-year course especially, no effort has been made to get beyond the mere practice phase, and really *read* something with only the thought of content in mind. It is so hard for us to let go of the idea of *absolute thoroughness* and not to catch our breath hard at the thought of passing a word, much less a whole sentence without knowing its innermost shades of meaning! But do we do this in reading English? How many of us enjoy reading Dickens, for instance, or Scott, or Shakespeare, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Poe, or Longfellow, without in the least being able to define every word and diagram every sentence. To use another illustration, if our vehicle moves so slowly as to sound every depression in the road, the pleasure of the ride is spoiled. "Hitting the high places" is a piece of homely slang that every language teacher needs to keep in mind. Along with the thorough, slow, painstaking work that must be kept up regularly,

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\* On leave 1918-19 in United States Civil Service.

to be sure, every language class has a right to demand that in some of its reading it be allowed to "hit the high places", to read the story "by the murders and marriages", with only the aim of enjoyment before it.

With this principle taken for granted, we are ready to consider how each type of reading may be conducted successfully, and where the division is to be made.

a) *Reading for Practice.*

Whatever reading material is contained in the grammar text is put there for grammar drill purposes, and is to be so used. If we take up a reading text in addition to the grammar, as is usually done, it seems only sensible to choose one that can be used as a variant to the grammar work; one to which the principles learned in grammar study can be directly applied; one which does not make too serious an increase in the vocabulary required of the class. Assuming that such a text has been chosen, it must be treated differently from the grammar. There is no object in having *two* books at the same time for drill in supplying lacking endings, changing singulars to plurals, presents to preterites, etc. The reading book must have some intrinsic worth, must contain something the pupil wants to find out, and must be used so that he will both find it out and gain practice that will enable him to find out more with less effort. What are some of the practical devices for accomplishing these ends? The suggestions made here will, it is hoped, be but a spur to each individual teacher, not things to be adopted blindly and followed slavishly.\*

Upon first taking up a new reading lesson in the elementary stages of the study, let us say early in the second half-year, it is of importance that the first impression be a correct one. Ordinarily it is a good plan for the teacher to read aloud to the class the lesson to be assigned, or to entrust this to some especially able pupil. (This does not mean that an occasional test in reading new material shall not be given the class. Such a procedure is to be encouraged as leading up to ultimate self-dependence.) It must be borne in mind that the teacher is usually the only correct model the pupil has to follow, and in phrasing, sentence accent, intonation, and the like, imitation is of as great importance as in mere pronunciation drill. Let the teacher read to the class frequently, and let the teacher *prepare carefully* for such reading! It must be well done.

The lesson has been read and the assignment is to be made. Not, "Take this page for tomorrow," but rather, "Read this aloud several times, then go through it carefully, writing in a neat column the phrases and expressions not understood. Not only single words, but whole phrases that

\* In connection read A. Méras: *Possibilities in a Reading Lesson*. *Modern Language Journal* 1:10-17, and Marian Whitney: *The Place of Reading in the Modern Language Course*. *Educational Review* LI: 189ff.

cause difficulty are to be written down. Then, and not until then, turn to vocabulary and notes for a thorough study of the "unknowns", writing down the meanings opposite the originals." That is enough for one assignment, and it is not difficult to divide the material into such sections that this much work on each section will occupy the available preparation time for one recitation.

The next day the pupils come with the assignment done. The lesson is again read in German, \* preferably a sentence by each pupil. The teacher has, of course, prepared a list of words, phrases and sentences that he thinks the class will not know, and when one of these is reached he asks, *Was bedeutet — — auf Englisch?* or, if the class ought to know a German synonym, *Geben Sie ein anderes deutsches Wort für — —*. For this work the word lists are not consulted.

At the conclusion of the reading of five or ten lines, or any convenient short division of the text, pause is made and the pupils, with books open, answer short easy questions put by the teacher on the basis of the text. These, too, the teacher has, of course, prepared beforehand, the inexperienced teacher in writing. Such work should go fast; if it does not, the material is probably too difficult for the class at that stage, or the questions are too involved. When the whole lesson has been handled in this way, there is still time for considerable other work, in the grammar, for instance, in addition to the time necessary for making the next day's assignment.

This latter consists of a re-assignment of the same section, this time with instructions to translate it into English and also to practice re-narrating it from beginning to end in German. This ought not to require all the preparation time. A grammar assignment may be made in addition or a new section of the reading text be given its initial treatment. Teachers in schools using a long period with supervised study will welcome the opportunity for doing such preparation work as this with the class.

The third day the pupils close their books, the teacher puts German questions to draw out the main content of the section, one or two pupils re-narrate the section in German, and the whole class is given ten minutes to write the re-narration or as much of it as they can. Then *part* of the lesson is translated into English "by ear", i. e., the teacher or a pupil reading "sense groups" if the whole sentences are too long, the class translating with closed books. This is not to be protracted, especially if it is not readily done, but usually the class can do such translation with facility after such thorough preparation. In place of such aural-oral work, or in

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\* Although the illustrations used in this article are for German, the writer has successfully used the methods suggested here for French also.

addition to it, difficulties in the text can be cleared up or a short written translation test on some passage that the teacher is doubtful about can be given. This completes the work on this section, except the final reading for expression, which can be used as a review. Word lists, German re-narration and the translation into English are collected, the first and last for cursory examination in most cases, to see what pupils are slighting the work, the second for careful correction and future revision by the pupil. The use of a system of note-books is to be recommended.

At first progress will be very slow, but the work will be very thorough and will satisfy the demands of the aim we have set. As the class grows used to such a type of work, a process of alternation, not of complete omission of any one element, will make for speed. For instance, every element except the question and answer, and the re-narration may occasionally be omitted, care being taken to retain most often those types of exercises most needed by the pupils.

In the second year, after the completion of the grammar text, there may be alternated with the above types of work grammar drill and some re-translation into German, thus basing all the work directly on the reading. The grammar drill is perhaps best accomplished by a thorough parsing and analyzing of a short assigned passage.

With a class just beginning the study of *Immensee* a week's assignment worked out on this plan would be somewhat as follows:

First Day:—Pupils bring books to class for first time. Teacher reads first section, *Der Alte*. Class is set at work preparing the word list of unknowns under the guidance of the teacher. The conclusion of this list and the looking up of the definitions is given as the assignment, each pupil to get as much as he can (indeterminate assignment).

Second Day:—Continue work in class on word list. For those who have finished, provide suitable easy reading texts. Assign translation with assistance of word list.

Third Day:—Take up the drill exercises in the book if a direct method edition, such as Scribners', is used, or other forms of drill, as suggested above, if the book offers no help. Assign further drill exercises. Give the next section, *Die Kinder*, its preliminary reading.

Fourth Day:—Rapid drill exercises. Translation into English if desired. Begin word list No. II in class. Collect list No. I. Assign reading of section I for expression and the continuation of word list II.

Fifth Day:—Final reading of section I. Continue word list of section II in class and proceed as on second day.

Note:—If desired, section units may be lengthened as work progresses. Standing (project) assignment of home or outside reading provides for those who have finished preparation before the average. Indivi-

dual check kept on amount read and thoroughness of reading, as indicated later in this article. \*

Some of this reading for practice is needed by every high-school class as it studies a modern language. But as ability increases this can be more and more merged into a different, freer, more rapid type of work, as outlined in the general discussion at the beginning of this chapter, which may be called

b) *Reading for Enjoyment of Content.*

This type of work ought to be started soon after the introduction of the class to reading work. After the completion of an assignment as developed above, the teacher reads a page, possibly two pages, slowly and distinctly, the class following with books open. Promptly at the conclusion of the reading, books are closed and in ten minutes a summary in English of what has just been read is called for. The class is warned to avoid becoming entangled in details and to move quickly in thought from parts not fully understood to the easier portions, exerting all energies to understand the principal developments of the section read. At the following recitation the teacher may very well translate rapidly for the class the passage thus read, so that there may be no break in continuity of understanding. In translation, as in reading, the teacher ought occasionally to treat the class to a sample of well prepared and fluent work.

A passage treated in this fashion had best be regarded as permanently finished if the pupils are to be encouraged to look forward to such reading as a goal. From an occasional exercise, say once every two or three weeks in the beginning, it naturally would become more and more frequent until in the third and fourth year it becomes the usual manner of treating a reading lesson, the summarizing being gradually transferred from English to German and the translation omitted.

In addition to this form of class work, indeed, as a development and extension of it, we have outside or home reading. But before discussing that subject a word about the place and use of translation into English seems necessary.

Much of the opposition to translation into English would never have arisen if translation had not been so shamefully abused. Because it required less thought on the teacher's part than any other exercise, and because most human beings are inclined to take the path of least resistance; and furthermore, because secondary school teachers are often expected to carry an impossible burden of duties, translation came quite generally to usurp the major portion of the time in the class period. This tendency was further strengthened by the influence of the prevailing method of dealing with the reading work in ancient languages.

\* In connection read J. D. Deihl: *A Plan for Handling Advanced Reading—Texts in Modern Foreign Languages*. *School Review* XXIV: 359-364.

If some plan such as the one outlined above is followed in dealing with our reading material, translation may very well be used as one of the alternative devices, but it must be kept on the same plane as the others, and the teacher must not resort to it with a feeling of relief that *at last* the disagreeable duty of trying those new-fangled devices is performed, now for a good, restful period of passivity! This is the danger for many teachers. If it be further remembered, first, that written translation forms a better exercise for improving the pupil's English than oral translation; second, that oral translation is most effective when combined with ear-training; third, that either oral or written translation naturally form one of the last, not the first exercise on a given passage (except for purposes of sight-reading), the objections to the use of it will melt away. To be sure, we are teaching a foreign language, not English, but just as certain is it that every subject in the curriculum owes a service to the mother-tongue, and moderate use of translation is one of our best means of rendering such service, while we, at the same time, give the final test to our pupils' understanding of the passage. The teaching of *how* to translate naturally falls into the second year, from that point gradually decreasing almost to the vanishing point during the third and fourth years. \*

To return now to our outside or home reading, there is no reason why it should not be begun early in the second year, as soon as pupils, by the method described at the beginning of this section, have learned to grasp and summarize essentials in new work as a class exercise. One successful way of starting such extra reading is as follows. It permits of numerous variations, of course.

Have the school purchase a set of supplementary texts of very easy grade, such as Stoltze: *Bunte Geschichten*, Stoltze: *Lose Blätter*, Guerber: *Märchen und Erzählungen*, Kern: *German Stories Retold*, Foster: *Geschichten und Märchen*, sufficient in number to supply the whole class. If the school will not do so, nothing remains but to have the class buy the texts. Assign a certain number of pages or stories (three or four at the start) to be read during a week's time and reported on at some set date, preferably a Monday. If desired, no assignment of other work need to be made for this day as an encouragement, but this ought not to be absolutely necessary. If proper preparation has been made earlier in the course, the class will know how to proceed with such reading without translating. The report can be a class written exercise of ten or fifteen minutes, with

\* It might be well here to remind teachers of three or four fundamentals in teaching a class how to translate: 1. Locate all the verb, not neglecting to look for part of it at the end of the clause, in the case of German; 2. By means of case endings locate the subject and objects; 3. Determine the meaning of modifiers and attach them; 4. Follow a literal explanation with an idiomatic translation. Some of these points have been elaborated most helpfully by Dr. B. Q. Morgan in his edition of Leskien's *Schuld* (Oxford).

the option of writing in English at first. This work must not be made so difficult that the joy of reading will be lost because of the fear of the report. The teacher must judge carefully the right moment to *require* the report in German.

After completing one text in this manner, if the class has learned the method well enough, the plan of individual assignments may be begun. This may not be possible before the opening of the third year, but in many cases can be done in the closing weeks of the second year. The teacher, either from the school library, or from his own private collection, brings a number of books into class. He gives up one hour or part of it to a brief discussion of these texts, just pointed enough to arouse interest. It is preferable here to have four or five copies each of several texts. The grade of difficulty should be about that of the reading done in class the preceding semester.

As the pupils express desires, the books are handed them. A purely numerical report is taken each week at a regular time of the number of pages covered and a card catalogue record is kept for each pupil, showing the books read and the rate of progress by weeks. Thus a pupil falling behind can easily be detected and urged to do his best. The daily assignments of class work are limited as the outside reading increases. On the completion of a book the pupil makes an appointment with the teacher for a report, which may be either oral or written, and in the earlier stages at least may well be in English.

The number of pages to be covered in a term or semester is, of course, to be left indeterminate, and the rate of progress determined by the weekly average. This class average, i. e., the average number of pages per pupil shown in the weekly report, is usually sufficient spur to help on the laggards. Some ambitious pupils will read much beyond the average. Some may get so far ahead that it will pay to advise them to make up a year's credit by doing slightly more reading. The reading will prove much more interesting if pupils are encouraged to do it at times when they can read two or three hours at a stretch. It should be put upon about the same plane as their leisure reading in English.

It goes almost without saying that the teacher must be thoroughly familiar with the texts assigned or must read them with the pupils. No special list of texts for outside reading is absolutely necessary, as those of a grade suitable for class work in the preceding semester are usually found satisfactory. There are, however, some texts which on account of length, peculiar nature of contents, or special needs of particular pupils, had best be reserved for outside reading. No hard and fast line can be laid down for this.

Actual class experience has demonstrated amply the feasibility of the



various methods and devices outlined in this article. Whether any of these are ever used in exactly the suggested form is a matter of small consequence. The point of vital importance is the realization on the part of both teacher and pupil that language teaching, as indeed all teaching, is empty effort if limited to the mere acquisition of facts, without the development of at least some measure of power to use even very elementary facts for some higher aim. There is often more enjoyment obtained from a few scattering rays of sunshine penetrating the darkness than from the full glare of light upon a lofty summit. Who would wait to quench his thirst until he could drink the ocean dry?

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### **The Practical Study of Phonetics.**

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(Concluded.)

#### (4) The basis of articulation.

A further result of this practical study of phonetics is the recognition of the organic basis of one's own language as differing from that of other languages. In continued speech we can imagine our organs assuming a sort of neutral position from which they can most easily form the various articulations required. This is called the organic basis or basis of articulation. It stands to reason that in a language that forms most of its sounds in the front of the mouth, the tongue, which is the articulating organ *par excellence* will be drawn forward; whereas in a language with prevailing back articulations the organic basis will be further back in the mouth. This is the case in English, with the result that the tongue, being habitually drawn back from the teeth, does not articulate as far forward for the so-called dentals, *d, t, l*, as to really reach the teeth. This backward formation gives these English consonants a dull muffled sound, which produces a particular offensive effect in French, where the organic basis lies very far forward; the German taking an intermediate position between these two languages. In order to realize this dulling effect one need only accumulate such sounds in a short phrase. For instance, the well known line, "Didon dina, dit-on, du dos d'un dodu dindon" sounds much clearer when spoken with the dental *d* of the French. Likewise the phrase, "Ton thé t'at-t-il ôté ta toux" sounds different when pronounced with the French *t*. And so with *l*. "Elle laisse le lait au laboratoire là-bas." Especially with final *l* which is very much retracted in English, "L'hirondelle a-t-elle les ailes longues?" It does not merely sound more like French; it is also easier in combination with other forward French sounds. I should consider it rather difficult to pronounce such French